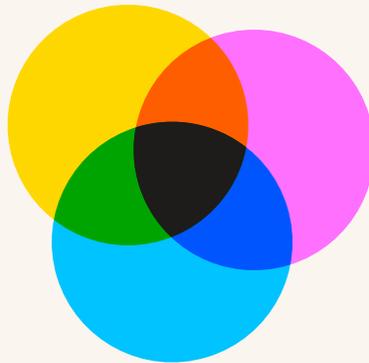


# Chatter



## Book Club Kit

*For the Parent and Caretaker*



# Ethan Kross

# For the Parent & Caretaker

1. Discuss the role that parents play in helping young children develop the ability to manage their emotions. As Kross writes in chapter one, children often repeat directives from their parents out loud before learning to internalize that speech: “This doesn’t mean that we always end up doing what our parents want—our verbal stream eventually develops its own unique contours which creatively direct our behavior—but these early developmental experiences do have a significant influence on us.” How do you think you have impacted your children and their verbal stream? Do you see the impact of your influence in action in your children now?
2. Do you ever find yourself being negatively affected by chatter when trying to parent your children? If so, what tools do you use (if any) to manage this chatter?
3. Can you tell when your children are being negatively impacted by their chatter? Do you or your children feel comfortable discussing chatter together—even if you might have used another word for it in the past (e.g., worry, rumination, anxiety, stress)?
4. Kross and his colleagues published a study in 2014 demonstrating that “the more time people spent passively scrolling through Facebook, peering in on the lives of others, the more envy they felt and the worse they subsequently felt.” Discuss how this impacts the lives of our children. What are the positive and negative impacts of children growing up with social media? What are the major differences in how your children are growing up now versus how you grew up? What positive and negative implications do these differences have for your children’s chatter?
5. How can you be a better “chatter advisor” to your children? If you have multiple children, would you advocate different tools for reducing chatter for each child? What are the different tactics you would take with different children? Would their age and personality influence how you advise them?
6. Who do you turn to when you are looking for parenting advice? In other words, who are your parenting “chatter advisors?” What is it about speaking to this person or these people that helps quiet your chatter?
7. Kross argues that human beings have trouble viewing themselves “with the same distance and insight with which we see others.” Are you able to view your children—and whatever issues might be causing them distress and excess chatter—with proper distance and insight? As a parent, do you ever feel that you are “too close” to help your child effectively?
8. How can you help your child reframe their problems as challenges, rather than threats?
9. Kross talks about how even the most well-intentioned attempts of people to provide those they care for with sound advice can backfire when they aren’t explicitly asked for help. Have you experienced this with your children? How have you dealt with it? Are there ways of invisibly helping your children manage their chatter that you’ve found particularly useful?
10. Rituals help people keep order in their life and, in turn, keep their chatter from overwhelming them. What rituals have you established within your family? Are there any rituals you might want to establish having read *Chatter*?
11. What do you hope your children would gain from changing the conversations they have with themselves? In what ways might changing those internal conversations impact your relationship with them?